



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/691,584	10/24/2003	Naruhiko Nakanishi	8038-1047	6943

466 7590 09/18/2006

YOUNG & THOMPSON
745 SOUTH 23RD STREET
2ND FLOOR
ARLINGTON, VA 22202

EXAMINER

HA, NATHAN W

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2814

DATE MAILED: 09/18/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/691,584

Applicant(s)

NAKANISHI, NARUHIKO

Examiner

Nathan W. Ha

Art Unit

2814

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 July 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 10, 12-15 and 17-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 10, 12-15 and 17-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

1. The indicated allowability of claims 10, 12-15, and 17-22 is withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s) to Aggarwal and Aaltonen. Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

3. Claims 10, 12-15, and 17-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Aggarwal et al. (US 2003/0119271, newly cited, hereinafter, Aggarwal.)

In regard to claim 10, in fig. 3, Aggarwal discloses a method for forming a capacitor element having a capacitor film made of strontium titanate, comprising steps of:

forming a barrier metal 122 over a semiconductor substrate 102;

forming a bottom electrode 124 on the barrier metal film;

depositing an amorphous strontium titanate film 126 on the bottom electrode (see paragraphs [0056, 0058, and 0089]; and

performing crystallization film into a single-crystal strontium titanate film by rapid thermal annealing the strontium film at a temperature between 500 and 650 degrees C in an inert gas ambient (see also [0058].)

In regard to claims 12 and 17, Aggarwal further discloses that the inert gas includes argon and nitrogen (see also [0089]).

In regard to claims 13 and 18-19, the thermal annealing process is conducted for one minute (see also [0089]).

In regard to claim 14, Aggarwal further discloses forming a top electrode 128 on the strontium film.

In regard to claim 15, the bottom electrode includes a titanium nitride layer, for example, TiAlN (see also [0052]).

In regard to claims 21 and 22, see the discussions above regarding to claims 10 and 13.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aggarwal as applied to claim 10 above, and further in view of Aaltonen et al. (US 2005/0020060, newly cited, hereinafter, Aaltonen.)

In regard to claim 20, Aggarwal discloses all of the claimed limitations as mentioned above. Aggarwal further suggests that the metal can be Ruthenium, Ru, as an alternative metal (see [0103]). Aggarwal, however, does not expressly disclose that the Ru is polycrystalline. It should be noted that polycrystalline metals are commonly used in semiconductor devices in order to improve the conductivity of a layer. For example, Aaltonen in fig. 1, discloses an analogous device, a capacitor structure, and further teaches that the metal layer of Ruthenium may be a crystalline layer (see also [0103-0104]).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to form the Ru layer as a polycrystalline layer in order to take the advantage as mentioned.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 10, 12-15 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nathan W. Ha whose telephone number is (571) 272-1707. The examiner can normally be reached on M-TH 8:00-7:00(EST).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wael Fahmy can be reached on (571) 272-1705. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathan Ha", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nathan Ha
September 11, 2006